MEETING MINUTES

TODAY'S DATE:	090721	MEETING #:	Workshop #5
PROJECT NAME:	SLU Urban Design Framework	MEETING DATE:	090716
		PROJECT #:	09-016 SERVICE: C / UD

SUBJECT: Workshop #5: Waterfront Development

LOCATION: Weber Thompson, 225 Terry Ave N. CR #1,2,3

ATTENDING:

CLIENT NAME	COMPANY NAME	INITIALS
Marshall Foster	City of Seattle, OPM	MF
Jim Holmes	City of Seattle, DPD	JH
Darby Watson	City of Seattle, SDOT	DW
Geoffrey Wentlandt	City of Seattle, DPD	GW
Peter Dobrovolny	City of Seattle, DPD	PD
Eric Tweit	City of Seattle, SDOT	ET
Dan Foltz	Weber Thompson	DF
Catherine Benotto	Weber Thompson	CB
Brian Steinburg	Weber Thompson	BS
Dan Albert	Weber Thompson	DA
Myer Harrel	Weber Thompson	MH
Bill LaPatra	Mithun	BL
David Yuan	NBBJ	DY
John Pearson	LUOA	JP
Lloyd Douglass	CNC	LD
Phil Fuji	Vulcan	SC
Ron Turner		RT
Matt Edwards	Equity Office Properties	ME

Introduction

Purpose of Workshop #5:
1. Provide guidance to future charette teams so that they can study charette topics in more detail
2. Provide guidance to the City of Seattle for the SLU EIS and revisions to the neighborhood plan, design guidelines, etc.

Goals of Workshop #5:
1. General Discussion of appropriate urban form approaching the lake (spacing of towers, not height).
2. Develop urban design values and strategies that inform the development of the Valley Street Blocks (4 blocks between Fairview and 9th, Valley and Mercer).
   a. What specific opportunities and challenges arise from this area that will affect urban form decisions?
   b. How should the development respond to the park?
   c. If Valley and Terry are "Festival Streets" how does that affect the urban form?
   d. How should the massing reflect larger urban design goals including
      i. view corridors,
      ii. urban rooms at Mercer, Valley, and the N-S streets
      iii. Identified architectural Gateways
3. Develop urban design values and strategies that inform the development of the blocks between Westlake and Aurora north of Valley.
   a. What specific opportunities and challenges arise from this site that will affect urban form decisions?
   b. Pedestrian connections and view connections
   c. How should city owned property be used?
4. Develop urban design values and strategies that inform the future development of the Waterfront along Eastlake
   a. What specific opportunities and challenges arise from this site that will affect urban form decisions?
   b. Waterfront promenade
   c. Eastlake improvements
   d. How should street ROW ending at the waters edge be utilized?

Structure of Workshop #5:
1. 8:30-9:15 - Welcome / Introduction
   a. Focus of today's charette
   b. Presentation by David Yuan, NBBJ
   c. Presentation by Matt Edwards / Bill LaPatra, LMN
   d. Presentation by Darby Watson, SDOT: Valley Street Design
   e. SEPA View Corridors
2. 9:15-11:45 - Break out Groups
   a. Valley Street Blocks (1-1/2 hours)
   b. Westlake (1/2 hour)
   c. Eastlake (1/2 hour)
3. 11:45 – 12:30 - Team Reporting (10-15 minutes per team)

Presentations

1. **David Yuan, NBBJ**
   a. **Mercer Blocks - relationship to Mercer**
   - Consider varied podium heights – width of the street should be a key factor. Many great urban places have a relationship of 1H (building height) : 1.5W (street ROW). 85' high would relate to the 132' proposed width of Mercer.
   - Terry and Mercer, may be appropriate to provide corner plazas that emphasize Terry as a green street and main access to the park.
   - Mercer should support some retail but best to focus it at crossings
   - Taller building elements should be along Mercer to minimize shadowing on the park.
   b. **Mercer Blocks - relationship to Valley**
   - Typical Waterfront - 1 sided edge.
   - 40-50' height seems appropriate.
   - The intersection of Valley and Terry is where the lake naturally "dips down" in plan, and is also the lowpoint of the slope down from Capitol Hill and from Queen Anne. We could express this at Terry and Valley by carving out lively plazas that offer spill-out spaces.
   - Valley is good for retail frontage

2. **Bill LaPatra, MITHUN**
   a. **Casey Family Blocks**
   - Reviewed 4 different alternatives for residential and commercial, current zoning / proposed zoning.
   - Discussed relationship of the base elements to Dexter
     o With current zoning creates uniform low massing, blocking pedestrian and some private views from across Dexter to water.
     o With proposed zoning allows towers to be built and oriented to preserve / create pedestrian views to the water.
     o Discussed the possibility of minimizing or eliminating the base along Dexter to allow public view plazas.
     o Towers would block some views from the hill
   - Discussed relationship of the base elements to Westlake
     o Current zoning creates uniform low massing, minimizes opportunity for public spaces.
     o With proposed zoning allows towers to be built and public spaces accommodated along Westlake.
     o Plazas could extend from Dexter to Westlake, creating a 40' +/- base height at Westlake.

Team Reports

Team 1

1. **Mercer Blocks:**

a. **Option 1**
- Maintains Westlake as 2 way corridor north and south
- The geographic shape of the lake could guide the shaping of buildings south of Valley
    o Provide major open space in relation to this shape in the 3 blocks south of Valley between Westlake and Fairview.
    o Line with retail that will activate the spaces
    o Hold towers and major massing out of this area.
- Ease corners at Terry and Valley, but not Mercer and Terry
    o Questioned the comfort levels of exposed corner plazas on Mercer.
- Step massing up to Mercer
- 24/7 activity will minimize dead corridors

b. **Option 2**
- Eliminates Westlake as 2 way corridor north and south
- Extends park across Westlake ROW
- Uses 9th as 2-way access to neighborhood

2. **Westlake:**
    a. Option 1 Builds off of Option 2 for the Mercer street blocks above
        - Extend Park across Westlake ROW including, incorporating the current asphalt triangle where 9th and Westlake split.
    b. Option 2 similarly closes off Westlake and 9th Avenue north of Aloha, making 8th the primary route into SLU
        - Could pose freight problems, since 9th is a dedicated freight access road.
    c. Emphasize Pedestrian Connections from Dexter to Westlake aligning with Streets
    d. Look into ways to incentivize shared parking for existing waterfront businesses
        - Eliminate surface parking (and run-off)
        - Convert public and private parking to park extension.
        - Work with Equity Properties to accommodate existing parking
    e. Provide direct connection from Queen Anne to Waterfront along Highland.

Team 2

1. **Mercer Blocks:**
    a. Provide consistent frame to blocks facing lake
    b. Setbacks for views should be studied on the East side of Boren from John to Valley **to** keep a broader view of the Lake from futher up Boren.
    c. Special Paving should occur at Terry and Valley to mark its significance.
    d. Create corner plazas at Terry and Mercer, and Terry and Valley; create special or similar nodal points at corner Valley/Fairview and Valley/Westlake. Suggested that Valley between Westlake and Fairview to be periodically closed to traffic and be ped only for special events.
    e. Podium or building base does not need to be a consistent height and taller elements might meet grade, particularly at corner plazas.
    f. Curved corner on west side of Westlake at Valley to have a strong façade.
    g. Significant artworks should occur in plazas on Terry and Valley as part of gateway experience.

    h. Continue Terry Avenue Green Street treatment from Amazon Blocks all the way to the waterfront.
    i. Extend strong Valley Ave South side streetscape eastward to "Civic" Blocks/teardrop site.
    j. Treat Boren as an Alley accessing blocks on either side between Mercer and Valley; more intimate, urban hardscape than Terry and different than Boren south of Mercer.
    k. Support underground shared parking for 3 waterfront blocks, to minimize above grade parking and make below grade parking more efficient.
       - Requires below grade street vacation
    l. Mercer Street setback for sun exposure on the north side
    m. Support continuous retail/restaurant along Valley between Boren and Westlake, and corner oriented retail along Mercer.
    n. Provide for services or vendors at Streetcar station at the Park.
    o. Reitterated desire for corners of Fairview / Mercer to have the builing corners mark "gateway".
    p. Discussed possible mid-block connections (depending on parking configuration) but not to the detriment or dilution of street activity.
    q. Architecturally respond to axial relationship between Westlake and Eastlake Avenue and the Mercer Street Blocks
       - Towers and bases should respond in form and placement to create attractive long view from these streets (even if placed to Mercer side of the block)
       - Corners at Westlake/ Valley and Fairview / Valley / Eastlake should respond to these gateways.

  2. Westlake:
    a. Provide pedestrian connection at Highland between Westlake and Dexter
       - Locate future streetcar stop at Westlake for convenient link.
    b. Need stoplight where 8th Avenue meets Westlake
    c. Make both sides of Westlake pedestrian friendly
       - Provide wide sidewalks at the street
       - Provide on-street parking buffer on the West side
       - Provide active uses along the Western Edge of Westlake
       - Include urban plazas, and smaller pedestrian areas adjacent to the Westlake sidewalk in development on West side of Westlake.
       - Lot of landscaping and green walls
    d. Provide crosswalks and traffic calming measures more frequently.
    e. Buildings at bend in Westlake, on west side, should architecturally address terminus of view shed from corner of Westlake/Valley; to visually connect to SLU neighborhood.
    f. Extend Lake Union Park north by eliminating some public parking.
    g. Provide for strong pedestrian connections up to hill to Queen Anne.
    h. Provide green infrastructure in parking lots
       - Tree canopy to reduce heat island
       - Natural filtration if possible
       - Minimize energy use, provide photovoltaic panels.
       - Electrical car plug ins.
       - Zipcar parking

  3. Eastlake:
    a. Redesign public parking spaces to provide linear promenade and bike paths.

Team 3

1. **General Discussion:**
    a. Geographic and topographic confluence.
        - Geography of Lake Union dips into a low point approximately at Valley.
        - Topographic contours of SLU dip approximately at Terry between Queen Anne and Capital Hill.
2. **Mercer Blocks:**
    a. Mercer street facades.
        - Break down façade and provide well designed plazas that will be used by pedestrians and activated by retail.
        - Plazas could be mid-block or corner oriented, but should be buffered from the traffic.
    b. Treatment of Fairview between Mercer and Valley.
        - Probably not good spot for retail, or front entrance.
        - Could be good spot for live/work, or artists housing
        - Cannot be forgotten in street design or architectural response. Wrong response could make tough pedestrian area worse.
    c. Access to Valley Street Blocks.
        - Blocks flanking Boren should be accessed off of Boren without exception
        - Block between Westlake and Terry can only be accessed off of Terry, but that access should be minimized and concealed (i.e. multiple functions behind 1 door. Sort functions internally if possible).
    d. Consider view corridors along north-south corridors when massing buildings.
        - Especially Boren, best view of the lake due to topography.
        - Consider views when re-zoning
        - One option: consider creating plazas at Boren and Mercer while pulling taller mass of base away from Boren, opening up views.
    e. Maximize retail along Valley.
        - Provide flexibility for small to medium size retailers including restaurants and smaller cafes, stores.
    f. Locate commercial entrances and retail along Mercer.
        - An active Mercer street is important to minimizing its effects as a psychological barrier.
    g. Base height should be proportional to street breadth.
    h. Towers should be expressed to the ground to elongate them (slenderizing the massing) rather than create wedding cake stacks.
    i. Terry Avenue
        - Continue Terry Avenue Design across Mercer
        - Celebrate Mercer and Valley intersections with Terry
        - Receive – Channeled – Open to the lake
            o Provide an architectural response to those moving north on Terry, pedestrians should be received as the cross Mercer, Channeled towards the lake, then one's experience and view should be opened up dramatically to the lake. The sequence should provide a sense of arrival to a place of importance in the city, not just an intersection.

3. **Westlake:**

    a. Emphasize Pedestrian Connections from Dexter to Westlake with Private Development incentives (don't have to align with streets if not possible)
- Well designed terraces, stairs, pathways, retail to support development similar to the proposal presented to DRB March 19, 2008, DPD Project #30084245 (this citation should not be construed as limiting use, massing, program, or supporting any design proposal, just using this project as a case study for the open space connection component).

    b. An active streetwall is important along Dexter, even if minimal in height and / or depth to allow active retail frontage and building amenities / entries to activate Dexter.
- Avoid Corbusien tower plazas
- Break street frontage with public plazas and gateways to hillclimb connectors to Westlake.

    c. Views from Dexter should open up to the lake
- Mass buildings appropriately so that view impacts are minimized.

    d. Aloha, Valley, Roy street between Aurora and Westlake should go on road diet, become pedestrian oriented green streets with minimal traffic.

4. Eastlake:
    a. Eliminate or minimize public parking lots
    b. Create long promenade and bike route down north side of Eastlake
    c. Provide Some retail or mixed use between Boren and Fairview, north of Valley
    d. Continue pedestrian path into the park rather than along Valley
    e. Long term, if possible eliminate older retail buildings and incorporate into park

Other General Comments or Observations:

ALL After reviewing these minutes, if you have any comments or corrections, please notify us within seven days of receipt or we will assume you concur with the above.